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The Little Book That Can Change Your Life

BY JIM DONOVAN



Adobe PDF version published by
Tara Communications Centre Inc.
Brampton, Ontario, Canada

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ISBN 1-55226-094-1

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THE LITTLE BOOK THAT CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE

***“If you advance confidently in the direction of your dreams,
endeavor to live the life which you’ve imagined, you will meet
with a success unexpected in common hours.”***

Henry David Thoreau

WHY THIS BOOK?

It was not that long ago when I found myself at the lowest point I ever want to be in my life. I had hit my personal “bottom.” While I was not quite homeless (I had lived in a car for several days) I was living as close to it as you can get. I had no job, a furnished room in one of the worst neighborhoods in New York City, few friends left, failing health and little hope for the future. Yes, I even thought of suicide. However, I knew these circumstances could change if I were given half a chance.

When I could no longer stand the pain, I reached out and asked for help. Through a strong faith and supportive people, my

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life slowly began turning around. During this process, I began to read and listen to self help books and tapes and attend talks and seminars on personal development. I began to learn ideas and techniques that I was able to put to use to make changes in my life and begin to live the kind of life I wanted. The ideas in this small book are designed to give you some of those tools for your own use. This is not theory. I have “*walked the walk*,” I understand what it is like to feel pain. I also know that you can do something about it.

Wherever you are at this moment, know that you can change your life. You can use these simple ideas and techniques to create a life that is beyond any that you have imagined. They worked for me and they’ll work for you too. You will need to do the work but the reward will be worth it.

I challenge you to take charge of your own life and begin now to create the kind of life you deserve to live. You are entitled to live a long, joyous, abundant, exciting life. This is your birthright. If you are experiencing less, you are shortchanging yourself.



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Play with the ideas expressed here. Complete the exercises. You may even want to refer back to them from time to time in order to gauge your progress. Add your own ideas and experiences. Let your imagination run. Have fun. And above all, be true to yourself.

*Believe in yourself,
Follow your heart,
Live your dreams!*



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IT'S YOUR LIFE

We have been conditioned to give away our power. Society has taught us to expect someone else to step in and solve our problems and “fix” our lives. I hate to break your bubble but it's not going to happen. You, and only you, can change your life. I can't. Your mother can't. Your spouse can't. The government can't. If you want a better life - the kind of life you deserve - then you must take responsibility and make it your job to do whatever needs to be done. When you become willing to accept responsibility for the conditions in your life, the good and the not so good, you gain the personal power necessary to change them.

Decide now to take responsibility and take charge of your own life. The next step is to determine where you are and what you want to change.

Before continuing, please complete the exercise on the following page.

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MY PERSONAL INVENTORY	
What I Like About Myself	What I Want To Change



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*“Ask and you will receive. Seek and you will find; knock and
it will be opened to you”*

MATTHEW 7:7

LIVE YOUR DREAMS

When was the last time you thought about your dreams? Have you ever taken the time to really think about all of the things you want to do, be and have? When you were a child, what were your dreams? Have you pursued them? Do you still want them now?

What if you had a magic wand and could wave it and you would have absolutely anything you wanted? What would that be? Would you want a new car, a better job, your own business, to travel, a loving relationship, money, to learn another language, a boat, to learn to fly, to be a better parent, to swim with dolphins, go skydiving visit your parents more often, get your degree, go on a retreat, join a church? Whatever you desire, you can have.

When you were a child you knew how to dream. Children have



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no trouble asking for what they want. Become a child again for the sake of this exercise.

Remember, if you want a Big life, you need Big dreams.

Write quickly and do not edit. Let your sub-conscious mind come up with what you really want in your life. Let yourself go. Be outrageous!

Don't worry about how you will accomplish these dreams. We will cover that later in this book. For now, simply dream. Write down everything you can think of that you want to be, do, and have. Use additional paper if you need it. Really let yourself go. Reread the Bible quote above. Now, what do you want?

On the following page, spend no more than 20 minutes writing everything you can think of that you want now or in the future. Let your mind run wild. Brainstorm all of the things you would want to do, be or have.



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WHAT YOU BELIEVE

There is an old saying that still rings true today “*Whether you think you can, or you think you can’t, you’re right.*” Our beliefs about ourselves determine what we accomplish. Thomas Edison said that “*if we did all the things we are capable of doing, we would literally astonish ourselves.*” The challenge is that most of us were influenced by other people’s limiting beliefs and we took them to be fact. How often have you heard, “*You can’t do that!*” Have you ever had an idea for a business, only to have some well intentioned person say, “*that won’t work!*” Maybe you are constantly telling *yourself* you can’t do something.

Our potential is, within reason, unlimited! Unfortunately, we rarely tap into that unlimited potential because of our own limited beliefs. Our beliefs keep us from taking the actions that would enable us to succeed. The time has come for you to destroy your limiting beliefs and develop new, empowering ones.

The simplest way I know of to breakdown a limiting belief is to question it. Once you have challenged your limiting belief, you have already weakened it. Think of your belief as a three legged



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stool. Each time you question it, it is like knocking out one of the legs. Like the stool, your limiting belief will fall because it does not have enough support. Question your limiting beliefs and see if they are really true or merely some old baggage you have been carrying around.

Next, you want to create new, empowering beliefs. One way to do this is by **seeing** yourself doing whatever it is you want to accomplish. **Visualize** your successes and pretty soon, they will be yours. **Tell** yourself you are succeeding. Another strategy is to locate others who have done what you want to do. Find out the actions they took and model them. If you want to lose weight, find people who have succeeded and model their actions.

On the next page, write three to five limiting beliefs you want to change and then, three to five empowering ones you want to cultivate. Use the above techniques on your beliefs. Remember, a belief is just that, a *belief* not a fact. People used to believe the world was flat!

*“Whatever you believe, with conviction,
you will achieve.”*



EXERCISE: BELIEFS

List 3-5 beliefs you would like to change

List 3-5 beliefs you would like to develop



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WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

If you don't know where you're going, how will you know when you get there? You need goals. Goals are magical! Entire books have been written about setting and achieving goals. When you put a goal to paper you bring into play all of the powers in the universe - seen and unseen. It is as though you are signaling your subconscious mind that you are serious. That this is what you really want.

Goals must be written. A goal that you are carrying around in your head is not a goal, it is a wish. It is too easy to change your mind at the first sign of difficulty. The act of committing it to paper transfers it from a wish to a tangible, achievable goal. One that you can then act upon in order to manifest it in your life.

J.C. Penny one of the most successful business people in our history said, "Show me a stock clerk with goals and I'll show you a man who can make history. Show me a man without goals and I'll show you a stock clerk."

Write your goals in the present tense (I am, I have, I own) and use positive wording. Define what you want, not what you don't

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want. If you want to weigh 20 pounds less that you do now, write your goal as “*I am at my ideal weight of 160 pounds.*” Measurable goals have a “completed by” date. Goals are personal. You can’t set goals for someone else.

You can set goals for different time frames (six month, one year, five years, ten years, etc.) and for different areas of your life - career & financial, fitness & health, family & relationships, mental & spiritual. Read your goals daily to help you stay focused and on track for their accomplishment.

From your dream exercise on page 10, choose one goal in each of the four categories above and write it in the space provided on the next two pages (choose a goal that you really want and one that you can reasonably accomplish in one year’s time). Next, write the reasons why you want this goal. It has been said that you can accomplish any goal if you have a big enough why. In your journal, you can complete this exercise for you medium and long range goals as well.

When you reach a goal don’t cross it off, instead put a big red “V” for victory next to it and celebrate your accomplishment.



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EXERCISE: SHORT TERM GOALS
Career/Finance:
Why I Want it:
Health/Fitness:
Why I Want it:



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EXERCISE: SHORT TERM GOALS
Family/Relationships:
Why I Want it:
Spiritual/ Mental:
Why I Want it:



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EXERCISE: GETTING LEVERAGE

For each of the goals you set on pages 16 and 17, answer the following:

- * What is stopping you from already having this goal?
- * What would your life be like if you had this goal? List all the great feelings and benefits of already having this in your life.
- * What are you presently missing out on by not having this in your life? What pain are you experiencing because you do not have this? What are your family and loved ones missing out on?

The exercise above is designed to help you get leverage on yourself. The more pleasure you associate to having the goal and the more pain you associate to not having it, the easier it will be to motivate yourself to take the necessary action.



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TAKING ACTION

One of the great motivators for continuing to set goals is having successfully accomplished one or two of the goals you set. When we reach a goal, it gives us a sense of fulfillment and encourages us to continue to set and work toward even greater goals. A good way to begin this practice is to single out 4 or 5 areas of your life and assign specific action steps to begin. For instance, if one of your main goals will be about better health (an area most of us would like to improve), an action step could be to begin taking a daily walk. You could achieve this right now! You could put this book down and go out the door, take a walk and come back to this later. Go ahead, I'll wait!

If one of your goals is to get a better job, perhaps you could call your local college or adult education center and request a catalog of courses. If you want to make more sales, you can start by making that extra phone call or going to see that hard to close prospect.

Look at your goals list and, on the next page, write each main

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goal you have set. Next to each, write one step you can take - right now - that will bring you closer to reaching the goal.

These can be weekly or even daily goals and can include things like “I will use a ‘to do’ list and check off each daily goal as I accomplish it.”

Later, you can come back to this list and add additional action items as you progress.

GOAL	ACTION	DONE
Get in better shape	Take a 20 min. walk	✓
-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----



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“Concerning all acts of initiative and creation, there is one elementary truth - that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves, too”

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

COMMITMENT

Once you have determined your goals and begin taking action, the one single trait that will keep you going in the face of obstacles is your commitment to what you want to accomplish. A strong commitment is the single most important characteristic you can develop. With it, you can overcome any obstacle. Without it, you are doomed to fail.

When things do not go the way you want and they certainly will, it is your level of commitment that is tested. If your commitment is strong, you will get through whatever is happening. Whether you are in a new relationship, starting a business, or

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wanting to lose a few pounds, the same principle applies. You must be totally committed.

Supposing for a moment you want to start your own business. This is a popular practice right now and many people are facing the challenges and reaping the rewards of self employment.

If you are starting a new business, you must be committed to succeeding. In his classic book, *“Think and Grow Rich”*, Napoleon Hill talks about *“burning all your bridges.”* The reason is that, if you have no other choice, you will use all of your resources to accomplish what you want. Be careful of the trap of fence sitting. This practice has been the downfall of many well intentioned people. You must be committed. Thomas Edison tried almost 10,000 times before he succeeded in creating the electric light. If he had given up, you would be reading this by candlelight.

One way to increase your level of commitment is to ask yourself why you are doing this in the first place. What will it mean to you to reach this goal? Write down the reasons why you will succeed and why you will not quit. **Commit to your dreams now!**



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*“Our doubts are traitors and make us lose the good we oft
might win, by fearing to attempt”*

William Shakespeare

OVERCOMING FEAR

As the above quote so aptly points out, nothing will squash your dreams faster than fear. You must learn to overcome fear if you want to have the kind of life you deserve.

We are born with only two fears, the fear of loud noises and the fear of falling. The rest are learned fears. Some of these, of course, are useful. Teaching a child it is not good to run into traffic is a healthy fear and needs to be taught to youngsters. Many of the other fears we learn are no so healthy. Being afraid to take any chances or to risk even a little is a not-so-healthy fear. The fear of failure, deeply ingrained into most of us, is one of those unhealthy fears that block us from taking action.

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To reach your goals and truly live the life of your dreams, you may have to take some chances. Right now, right here, determine that - no matter what happens - you cannot fail. Everything you do produces a result. It may not always be the result you were looking for but it is, in fact a result. You have not failed. It's OK to make mistakes, like the Billy Joel song says, "*You're only human.*"

What stops most of us from taking action is the fear that we might fail. *So what?* Is that any more debilitating than sitting in a rocker twenty or thirty years from now and wondering what could have been if only you had taken a chance? Just go out and do it!

One of the causes of the fear is the quality of questions we ask ourselves. All too often we ask poor questions like, "*What if I fail, what if it doesn't work?*" Instead, why not ask, "*What if I succeed?*"

Remember: FEAR is only False Evidence Appearing Real.

Complete the exercise on the next page, then go out and face your fears. You may be pleasantly surprised at the outcome.



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EXERCISE: ELIMINATING FEAR

Complete the following:

What is it that you fear doing?

What is the worst that can happen?

What is the likelihood of that happening?



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What are you missing out on by not doing this?

What will you get if you do take this action?

Do It Now!



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PROBLEM SOLVING

Often, life's biggest problems and challenges can be turned into our greatest opportunities. There are Countless stories of people who overcame what seemed, at the time, to be insurmountable problems and triumphed.

Many of our most successful businesses were born out of the need to solve a problem or challenge. One such story is that of a young mother who was unable to find suitable playthings and television programs for her young child. After endless searching, she decided to make her own. The result was a giant purple dinosaur we have all come to know as "Barney." Whatever your present problem, there is within it the seed of opportunity.

Following are some actions you can take which will help you work through your problem:

* **Write it down.** Often, the simple act of writing the problem out on paper brings it into the light where it can be clearly examined and solved.

* **Share it with a friend.** Telling your problem to a close



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friend or mentor will help you begin to solve it. There is a saying that “a problem shared is a problem halved.” I am not, however, suggesting you go around complaining to everyone you meet. What I am suggesting is sharing your problem or challenge with people who can help you solve it.

* **Focus on solutions.** We have a tendency to keep running the problem around in our minds. Once you have identified the problem and written it down, spend your time on solutions. Ask questions like, “*How else can I perceive this?*” or “*What action can I take to change this situation?*” This will cause your mind to seek solutions rather than keep holding onto the problem.

Remember the wise words of the late Dr. Norman Vincent Peale who cautioned us that the only people who have no problems are lying six feet in the ground and are dead. See your problems as challenges to be met. They just might contain your greatest opportunity. Go ahead and meet them head on.



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MASTERING CHANGE

The only thing constant is change! Everything in the universe, including you, is in a constant state of change. From the twinkling stars in the galaxy as they come into being, to the very cells in our bodies, change is the order of the day.

I have always found it odd that with all this change occurring, many times, we resist it at every turn. This has to be the height of insanity - resisting change in an ever changing universe.

If you want to have a better, more fulfilling life it is crucial that you become more adaptive to change. Learn to “go with the flow.” Develop strategies and beliefs that will enable you to handle the changes that will surely occur in your life.

How well do you adapt? Do you cling to old beliefs and habits even though they are not serving your own best interests? Are you hanging onto a past that no longer exists? Or do you welcome change, knowing that it will be for the better?

One way to develop a welcoming attitude toward change is to cultivate a strong faith in a power greater than yourself - a Higher Power. Learn to trust in God.

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Another is to maintain a strong belief that, no matter what happens, you will get through it. Know, deep in your heart of hearts, that you are bigger than any outside force or circumstance.

Look back over your life. I think you will agree that every situation you encountered was, in the end, for your greater good and probably left you a stronger and more resourceful person. Trust that everything happens for a reason. Learn to look for the opportunity in every situation rather than dwell on the negative.

The more flexible you become, the better you will be to handle whatever life sends your way.

Remember:
“If life gives you lemons, make lemonade.”



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YOUR PROMISE TO YOURSELF

Congratulations!

You have just made a major step forward in creating the life you deserve to live. If you skipped over any of the exercises, please go back and do them now. These are the “tools” that you will use as you progress in your journey.

If you are not already keeping a journal, now is a great time to begin. A life worth living is worth recording. It's really great to be able to go back to your journal, after several years have passed, and see the progress you have made. One of my mentors, Tony Robbins, has said that we greatly overestimate what we can accomplish in a year but greatly underestimate what we can do in a decade. Keeping a journal is a great way to measure your accomplishments over time.

Decide now to live your dreams. You have the necessary tools. You have identified what it is you want in your life. Now, it's up to you.



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Promise yourself, your family and your Higher Power that you will pursue these dreams to the best of your ability. Decide now that you will succeed!

You, and only you, can decide to act. Whatever you want in life, it's there waiting for you. All you need to do is decide what you want and take action and, in the words of Sir Winston Churchill addressing the British troops entering combat, "*Never, never, never, never give up.*"

One last thought. Continue your quest to reach your full potential as a human being. Make it a practice to read positive, personal growth material for twenty to thirty minutes each day. You will be amazed at the difference it will make in your life. Visit your library and bookstores. There are hundreds of excellent books and tapes available to assist you in your journey. Become a stalker of ideas and inspiration.

Be well and God Bless,
Jim Donovan



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Order Jim's critically acclaimed self-help book "**Handbook To A Happier Life**" available in E-Book form from your on-line bookseller, and continue your journey to live the life of your dreams:

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